

STATE SURFACE AND GROUND WATER STANDARDS



Surface Water Standards

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) classifies surface waters of the state according to present and future “most beneficial uses” pursuant to Section 403.061(10), Florida Statute (F.S.). Standards for surface water quality have been established by the FDEP to protect these designated uses.

Surface water standards have been established by the State taking into consideration the use and value of state waters for public water supplies, propagation of fish and wildlife, recreation, agriculture, navigation, and industrial uses. The FDEP is charged with assuring that water quality standards are met through imposition of effluent limits on point source discharges and achievement of all cost-effective and reasonable best management practices (BMPs) for nonpoint source discharges, through measures authorized under state statute and FDEP rules (see Chapters 373 and 403, F.S.).

The FDEP has identified excessive levels of total nitrogen and total phosphorus in surface waters among the most severe water quality problems facing the state. It has given special consideration to preventing further degradation of waters which are very high in nutrient concentrations and protecting waters that are very sensitive to nutrient enrichment, including those that contain very low nutrient concentrations.

Designated uses for Florida surface waters have been divided into five classes as follows:

CLASS I	Potable Water Supplies
CLASS II	Shellfish Propagation or Harvesting
CLASS III	Recreation, Propagation and Maintenance of a Healthy, Well-Balanced Population of Fish and Wildlife
CLASS IV	Agricultural Water Supplies
CLASS V	Navigation, Utility and Industrial Use

Class I waters generally have the most stringent water quality criteria and Class V have the least. Narrative minimum criteria listed in the Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.) require all classes of surface water to be free from harmful concentrations of pollutants. Specific numeric water quality criteria also apply to each class (see 62-302.530 F.A.C.).

All surface waters of Florida are designated Class III unless they are specifically listed in 62-302.400(12) F.A.C., which identifies water bodies designated Class I, Class II, Class IV and Class V. Class I and Class II water bodies are listed by name. Class IV comprises all secondary and tertiary canals wholly within agricultural areas. “Secondary and tertiary canals” refers to any wholly artificial canal or ditch which is behind a control structure and which is part of a water control system that is connected to the works of a water management district and permitted by the water management district.

A water body may be designated as an Outstanding Florida Water or an Outstanding National Resource Water in addition to being classified as Class I, II or III. The highest protection by the State is afforded to Outstanding Florida Waters and Outstanding National Resource Waters. A complete listing of these waters may be found in 62.302.700 F.A.C.

More information on state surface water standards and state rules pertaining to surface water permitting can be found by selecting the Water Quality Standards Rules or Surface Water and Wetlands Rules link at the following website:

<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/legal/legaldocuments/rules/rulelistpa.htm>.

Ground Water Standards

The FDEP classifies ground waters of the state according to present and future “most beneficial uses” (62-520.300 F.A.C.). Standards for groundwater quality have been established by the FDEP to protect these designated uses.

The designated use classes for Florida ground waters are:

Class F-I *	Potable Water Use (single source aquifer)
Class G-I	Potable Water Use (single source aquifer)
Class G-II	Potable Water Use
Class G-III	Non-potable Use
Class G-IV	Non-potable Use

*** applies only in northeast Flagler County.**

Class G-I and F-I waters generally have the most stringent water quality criteria and Class G-IV the least. The highest level of protection is afforded to “single source aquifers,” which are those determined by the state to be the only reasonably available source of potable water to a significant segment of the population. These aquifers constitute the G-I and F-I classes.

Narrative criteria in 62-520 F.A.C. requiring ground water to be free from harmful concentrations of pollutants applies to all classes except G-IV, which is typically exempted from this requirement. Specific numeric water quality criteria apply to each ground water class (see 62-520.420 to 62-520-460 F.A.C.).

More information on state ground water standards and state rules pertaining to groundwater permitting can be found by selecting the Ground Water Rules link at the following website:

<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/legal/legaldocuments/rules/rulelistpa.htm>.